

## Information for Volunteers

### Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and with that in mind we are aiming to give you a basic awareness and understanding of issues associated with safeguarding adults. We will include an outline of TVAA reporting policy and procedure.

We must all ensure that any concerns relating to the abuse of an adult are properly addressed and that we all promote the safety and well-being of the adults that TVAA, both staff and volunteers, come into contact with.

Aims of this handout:

- To recognise indicators and effects of abuse
- To understand good practice for disclosure, consent and confidentiality
- To give a basic understanding of guidance and laws in this area
- To give an understanding of the EAAA approach and response to safeguarding adults across our work so that all staff and volunteers feel confident about knowing how and when to respond to concerns

### What is abuse? What do you understand by the term?

- "Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons" taken from 'In Safe Hands' and 'No Secrets' - 2000, guidance and training.
- Abuse can be a one-off incident or a pattern of behaviour • Abuse can occur in personal and professional relationships
- Abuse can take place anywhere
- Abuse can often take multiple forms e.g. emotional and physical

### Types of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional or psychological
- Sexual
- Financial and/or material
- Neglect and/or acts of omission
- Discriminatory
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery
- Self-neglect

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## Effects of abuse

- Anger
- Fear
- Low self-esteem
- Physical illness
- Social isolation
- Shame
- Self-harm

Avoid jumping to conclusions about the reasons for someone exhibiting the signs highlighted above. Assumptions and judgements should NOT be made.

## Who is classed an adult?

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, a person under 18 years of age  
In Scotland, a person under 16 years of age.

## Terminology

The term 'vulnerable adult' has been replaced in more recent documentation by the term 'adult at risk'.

'Adult at risk' recognises that anyone can be at risk depending on what is happening to them in their lives whilst recognising that there are some factors which can increase people's risk. The term highlights that anyone can be an adult at risk.

## Factors which may increase the risk of abuse

- Physical or mental disability
- Age
- Bereavement or recent trauma
- Substance misuse
- Language
- Dependence on others for help and support
- Insecure immigration status
- Health status e.g. dementia
- Re-adjustment, perhaps following a stay in hospital, service in the armed forces or release from prison.

## What does disclosure mean?

Disclosure is the process of someone telling us something. If someone talks about having been abused, they are making a disclosure. If someone, other than an alleged victim, talks about a safeguarding concern it is a third-party disclosure.

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## **Disclosure good and bad practice**

### *Good Practice*

- Believe what you are being told
- Actively listen
- Reassure the person
- Stress that they are not to blame
- Explain about confidentiality
- Ask what the person would like to happen
- Follow EAAA policies and procedures
- As far as is practical make sure that the disclosure is taking place in an appropriate setting
- Inform the person what you will do next
- Maintain professional boundaries

### *Bad Practice*

- Make assumptions
- Be dismissive or ignore the person's concerns and fears
- Make light of the situation or change the subject
- Ask leading questions or investigate, that is not your role and could jeopardise the situation
- Express shock
- Speak to the perpetrator
- Promise things you may not be able to deliver
- Ask what they did to cause the abuse
- Be overly familiar e.g. 'yes, something similar happened to me'

## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information about a disclosure should only be shared on a need to know basis. It is good practice to work with the involvement of the adult at risk and to keep them informed.

## **Recorded Information**

If you need to write down what you have been told it should always be:

- Factual
- Accurate re: times and dates
- In the words of the person telling you
- Recorded as soon as reasonably practicable

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## Reporting procedure

Consider if there is immediate risk to the person making the disclosure, and what needs to be done in their best interests. For example, if you believe someone is at real and immediate risk of physical harm you should dial 999 and ask for the Police. If not, report the matter as soon as is practicable to [tvaa.safeguarding@nhs.net](mailto:tvaa.safeguarding@nhs.net)

## What happens after I report it?

The Safeguarding Lead will pass all the details to the Local Authority who will then lead on investigating the matter. The Safeguarding Lead for TVAA is Adam Crosby the Patient Liaison Manager.

## Responsibilities

TVAA have a responsibility to take all safeguarding concerns seriously, working within our agreed policies and procedures and within the framework of our represented local authority's Safeguarding Adults Policies. The Local Authority has a responsibility to respond to all concerns raised with them in a timely, proportionate and legal way.

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